

FORM PTO-1390
(REV 10-94)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

000020.00017

U.S. APPLICATION NO.

Unknown **09/807871**INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.
PCT/EP99/06821INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE
15 September 1999PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED
20 October 1998

TITLE OF INVENTION

THIN-WALLED COMPONENT MADE FROM HYDRAULICALLY HARDENED
CEMENT PASTE MATERIAL AND METHOD FOR THE PRODUCTION THEREOF

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

CHRISTIAN BECHTOLDT, ROLF-RAINER SCHULZ

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f) at any time rather than delay examination until the expiration of the applicable time limit set in 35 U.S.C. 371(b) and PCT Articles 22 and 39(I).
4. ☒ A proper Demand for International Preliminary Examination was made by the 19th month from the earliest claimed priority date.
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☐ is transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☒ has been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US)
6. ☒ A translation of the International Application into English (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
7. ☐ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are transmitted herewith (required only if not transmitted by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been transmitted by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ A translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
9. ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☐ A translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11. to 16. below concern document(s) or information included:

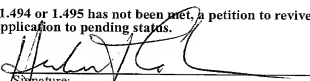
11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☒ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment.
 - ☐ A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
14. ☐ A substitute specification.
15. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
16. ☒ Other items or information:
 - Form PCT/ISA/220 - International Search Report
 - Form PCT/IB/332 - Information Concerning Elected Offices Notified of Their Election
 - Form PCT/IPEA/416 - PCT Notification of Transmittal of the International Preliminary Examination Report
 - Form PCT/IPEA/409 - PCT International Preliminary Examination Report

U.S. APPLICATION NO. Unknown 09/807871	INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/EP99/06821	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO. *000020.00017
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17. ■ The following fees are submitted: BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5)): Search Report has been prepared by the EPO or JPO \$860.00 International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) \$690.00 No international preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) but international search fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) \$1000.00 Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$690.00 International preliminary examination fee paid to USPTO (37 CFR 1.482) and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(2)-(4) \$100.00 ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =	CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY												
Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than ■ 20 □ 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).	\$ 860.00 \$												
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">CLAIMS</th> <th style="width: 25%;">NUMBER FILED</th> <th style="width: 25%;">NUMBER EXTRA</th> <th style="width: 25%;">RATE</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Claims</td> <td>54 - 20 =</td> <td>34</td> <td>X \$18.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Independent Claims</td> <td>2 - 3 =</td> <td>0</td> <td>X \$80.00</td> </tr> </table>	CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	Total Claims	54 - 20 =	34	X \$18.00	Independent Claims	2 - 3 =	0	X \$80.00	\$612.00 \$
CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE										
Total Claims	54 - 20 =	34	X \$18.00										
Independent Claims	2 - 3 =	0	X \$80.00										
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM(S) (if applicable) + \$270.00	\$												
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =	\$1,472.00												
Reduction by 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable. Verified Small Entity Statement must also be filed (Note 37 CFR 1.9, 1.27, 1.28).	\$												
SUBTOTAL =	\$1,472.00												
Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than □ 20 □ 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)). +	\$												
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =	\$1,472.00												
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28,3.31). \$40.00 per property +	\$ 40.00												
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =	\$1,512.00												
a. ■ A check in the amount of \$ <u>1,512.00</u> to cover the above fees is enclosed. b. □ Please charge my Deposit Account No. _____ in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed. c. ■ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. <u>23-2185</u> . A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.	Amount to be refunded: \$ charged: \$												

NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.

SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:
 CUSTOMER NO.: 002779
 BLANK ROME COMISKY & MCCAULEY LLP
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 900 - 17th Street, N.W., SUITE 1000
 Washington, D.C. 20006


 Signature:
 Herbert Cohen
 NAME
 25.109 April 20, 2001
 Registration No. / Date

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent application of)
Christian Bechtoldt et al.)
Serial No. Unknown)
National Phase of PCT/EP99/06821)
Filed: Concurrently Herewith) Atty. Dkt. No.: 00020.00017
HC\pdc)
For: THIN-WALLED COMPONENT MADE)
FROM HYDRAULICALLY HARDENED)
CEMENT PASTE MATERIAL AND)
METHOD FOR THE PRODUCTION)
THEREOF)

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner of Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination and fee calculation, kindly amend the application as follows:

In the Abstract:

Please enter the attached Abstract of the Disclosure.

In the Specification:

Beginning at page 6, line 13, add:

—BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention is best understood by reference to the drawings in which:

Fig. 1a shows a steel wool mat in an open shuttering mold;

Fig. 1b shows a steel wool mat compressed in accordance with the invention in a closed shuttering mold;

Fig. 2 schematically shows the injection process of the invention.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 28, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--The principle of this process is shown by way of example in Fig. 2. Suspension 5 is injected from below in a direction opposite to that of gravity via an inlet 4 into the edge-sealed shuttering 2,3 until the shuttering has been filled. The air can escape in an upward direction through the outlet 6. After curing of the suspension to form concrete, the shuttering is removed. The thin-walled component consists essentially of concrete and at least one compacted steel wool mat. It has unusually high strengths, plastic deformation capability, workability, energy absorption to fracture and elasticity, as a result of which such a thin component can be used as self-supporting building material. For example, it is possible to produce components less than 10 mm thick which have the following properties:--

Please replace the term "Claims" at the top of page 11, line 7, with the following term:
--WHAT IS CLAIMED--.

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1-57, without prejudice, and substitute the following new claims 58-111 therefore.

--58. (New) A fiber-reinforced, thin-walled component comprising a cement matrix made of a superfine cement and fluidizers, and a plurality of superposed, compressed steel comprising steel fibers, wherein the outer surfaces of the mats are virtually free of said steel wool fibers.

59. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein the main surfaces of said component are smooth and essentially superfine cement material is present on the surfaces.

60. (New) A component as recited in claim 59, wherein said steel wool mats are arranged so that the main directions of the steel wool fibers of the steel wool mats cross.

61. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein the content of steel wool mats ranges from 2 to 10% by volume.

62. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, having a thickness of from 3 to 10 mm.

63. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, having a bending tensile strength of from 25 to 80 N/mm².

64. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, having a compressive strength of from 30 to 75 N/mm².

65. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein the component is colored by means of pigments.

66. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein the component has a curved shape.

67. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein the component has a shuttering structure on its main surfaces.

68. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said steel wool fibers of the steel wool mats have a mean fiber diameter of from 0.05 to 0.20 mm.

69. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said steel wool mats have a weight per unit area of from 600 to 2000 g/m².

70. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said steel wool fibers have a length/diameter ratio of over 1000.

71. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said superfine cement matrix comprises microsilica in amounts of from 0 to 30 wt. %.

72. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said superfine cement matrix includes pigments in amounts from 0 to 5 wt. %.

73. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said superfine cement matrix includes inert minerals in amounts of from 0 to 70 wt. %.

74. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said superfine cement matrix includes quartz flour ranging from 0 to 70 wt. %.

75. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said superfine cement matrix includes superfine fly ash ranging from 0 to 50 wt. %.

76. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said superfine cement matrix includes portland cement.

77. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said superfine cement matrix is a slag cement matrix.

78. (New) A component as recited in claim 58, wherein said compressed steel wool mats are from 3 to 10 mm thick.

79. (New) A process for producing a thin-walled component reinforced with metal fibers, as recited in claim 58, comprising the steps of forming a thin wall using a plurality of steel wool mats which are superposed and compressed perpendicular to their respective main elongation in shuttering; after compression, a suspension comprising superfine cement and a highly effective fluidizer is injected into the shuttering and the steel wool mats; after the suspension is allowed to cure, the component is removed from the shuttering mold.

80. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein stainless steel wool mats are used.

81. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said steel wool mats include steel wool fibers which have mean fiber diameters of from 0.05 to 0.20 mm.

82. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said steel wool mats have fibers in which the fiber lengths are from 20 mm to a plurality of meters.

83. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said steel wool mats include fibers having a length/diameter ratio of over 1000.

84. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said steel wool mats have a weight per unit area of from 600 to 2000 g/m².

85. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said steel wool mats are compressed by about 10 to 20% of their thickness.

86. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein two steel wool mats are used and the main direction of the fibers of one steel wool mat is positioned at an angle to the main direction of the fibers of the other steel wool mat.

87. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein a superfine cement suspension comprising slag sand and activators is used.

88. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein a suspension comprising superfine portland cement is used.

89. (New) The process as recited in claim 88, wherein said superfine cement suspension has a graduated particle size distribution and a d_{95} of $\leq 24 \mu\text{m}$.

90. (New) The process as recited in claim 89, wherein said superfine cement has a mean particle size d_{50} of $\leq 7 \mu\text{m}$.

91. (New) The process as recited in claim 90, further including a dispersion of microsilica.

92. (New) The process as recited in claim 90, further including a pigment.

93. (New) The process as recited in claim 90, wherein a mineral material having at least the same fineness as the superfine cements is added.

94. (New) The process as recited in claim 90, further including naphthalenesulfonate as an effective fluidizer.

95. (New) The process as recited in claim 90, further including a polycarboxylate as a superfluidizer.

96. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein the following compositions are used for producing the suspension based on superfine cement:

Superfine cement:	from 30 to 100 wt. %
Fluidizer or flow improver (liquid)	from 0.1 to 5 wt. %
Fluidizer or flow improver (pulverulent)	from 0.1 to 2.5 wt. %
Microsilica (slurry)	from 0 to 30 wt. %
Pigments (pulverulent)	from 0 to 5 wt. %
Inert mineral materials	from 0 to 70 wt. %
Superfine fly ash	from 0 to 50 wt. %

based on the solids content of the suspension.

97. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said suspensions have a water/solids ratio of from 0.4 to 0.6.

98. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said suspensions have a consistency, measured as the Marsh outflow time, of from 35 to 75 seconds.

99. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said suspensions are produced by placing the required amount of water in a mixing vessel and adding the fluidizer or flow improver while mixing, then adding the previously weighed out dry materials and continuing to mix and thus homogenize the mixture.

100. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said steel wool mats are compressed between sealed shuttering and the superfine cement suspension is injected under pressure into the shuttering, with an air outlet being provided so that the air can escape from the space within the shuttering during injection.

101. (New) The process as recited in claim 100, wherein said injection is carried out in a direction opposite to that of gravity.

102. (New) The process as recited in claim 79, wherein said components have a final thickness of ≤ 10 mm.

103. (New) The component as recited in claim 79, in the form of a roof and/or exterior wall and/or wall cladding.

104. (New) The component as recited in claim 79 in the form of a sheathing or cladding.

105. (New) The component as recited in claim 79, in the form of half shells for producing and sheathing channels, pipes or the like.

106. (New) The component as recited in claim 79, in the form of a sandwich element for producing fire doors.

107. (New) The component as recited in claim 79, in the form of an external skin for steel-reinforced concrete components.

108. (New) The component as recited in claim 106, wherein the external skin is lost shuttering.

109. (New) The component as recited in claim 79, in the form of lost shuttering.

110. (New) The component as recited in claim 79, in the form of a material, wherein faulty areas and/or hollows in damaged concrete surfaces are stuffed with at least one steel wool mat, the mat is compressed and subsequently shuttered, sealed and the suspension is injected.

111. (New) The component as recited in claim 79, for molding complicated surface structures.--

REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment is submitted to make clarifying revisions to the specification and claims in accordance with U.S. practice. No narrowing of the claims scope is intended.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned **"VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."**

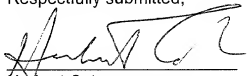
In the event there are any questions relating to this Amendment or to the application in general, it would be appreciated if the Examiner would telephone the undersigned attorney.

Please charge any shortage or credit any overpayment of fees to BLANK ROME COMISKY & MCCAULEY LLP, Deposit Account No. 23-2185 (000020.00017). In the event that a petition for an extension of time is required to be submitted herewith and in the event that a separate petition does not accompany this report, Applicants hereby petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are required to render this submission timely. Any fee due is authorized above.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: April 20, 2001

BY:


Herbert Cohen
Registration No. 25,109

BLANK ROME COMISKY & MCCAULEY LLP
900 - 17th Street, N.W., Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 530-7400 (phone)/(202) 463-6915 (facsimile)

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

Paragraph beginning at line 28 of page 7 has been amended as follows:

The principle of this process is shown by way of example in Fig. 2. Suspension 5 is injected from below in a direction opposite to that of gravity via an inlet 4 into the edge-sealed shuttering 2,3 until the shuttering has been filled. The air can escape in an upward direction through the outlet 6. After curing of the suspension to form concrete, the shuttering is removed. The thin-walled component consists essentially of concrete and at least one compacted steel wool mat. It has unusually high strengths, plastic deformation capability, workability, energy absorption to fracture and elasticity, as a result of which such a thin component can be used as self-supporting building material. For example, it is possible to produce components less than 10 mm thick which have the following properties:

Term beginning at line 7 at the top of page 11 has been amended as follows:

[Claims] WHAT IS CLAIMED

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention relates to a thin-walled component with a fine cement paste matrix and at least one steel wool mat that is pressed together and embedded in the fine cement paste matrix. The invention also relates to a method for producing a thin-walled component, whereby at least one steel wool mat is pressed together in a perpendicular position with respect to the main extension thereof, injected with a fine cement suspension, surrounded and the suspension is hardened.

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Thin-walled component of hydraulically cured concrete and process for producing it

The invention relates to a thin-walled, sheet-like component of high strength comprising hydraulically cured concrete and to a process for producing it.

Cured mortars reinforced with steel fiber mats are known under the name "slurry infiltrated mat concrete", hereinafter also referred to as SIMCON. Such concrete is produced by firstly preparing a flowable mortar from portland cement, water, sand, microsilica and superfluidizer and, for example, pouring it into a mold in which a steel fiber mat is located, so that the steel fiber mat is impregnated with mortar. Curing results in a concrete reinforced with steel fibers which has a considerably higher ductility and a more favorable crack distribution which gives higher strength on overloading compared to an unreinforced concrete. SIMCON is used to produce, for example, covering layers on components or lost shuttering (ACI Structural Journal/September-October 1997, pp. 502-512). However, only relatively thick and flat components having a minimum thickness of, for example, from 15 to 20 mm can be produced from SIMCON because the steel fiber mats are relatively thick and complete incorporation of the mats with flowable fresh mortar is relatively difficult.

It is an object of the invention to provide thin-walled components of high elasticity, in particular in respect of elastic bending, and high performance on the basis of cured concrete reinforced with steel fiber mats and also to provide a process for

producing it by means of which not only thin-walled, flat components but also thin components having any curved or angled shapes can be produced.

- 5 These objects are achieved by the features of claims 1 and 24. Advantageous embodiments of the invention are defined in the subordinate claims dependent on these main claims.

10 The invention provides for the use of commercial, compressed mats of steel wool. Preference is given to using stainless steel wool mats which have a higher strength and a very low oxidation rate and therefore have long-term corrosion resistance in the presence of, for example, water and/or moisture.

15 The stainless steel wool is, for example, produced from the material No. DIN 1.4113 or 1.4793 or from stainless alloy steels. Different mats have fibers of different fineness; for example, a mat having a mean fiber diameter of 0.08 mm is chosen for components having a thickness of ≤ 5 mm, while coarser, medium fiber diameters of, for example, 0.12 mm are suitable for components having a greater thickness. The fiber lengths are in the range from about 20 mm to a number of meters; their average length is a number of decimeters.

- 25 This long-fiber stainless steel wool is elastic and tough. The fibers have length/diameter ratios (L/D ratios) of over 1000. Accordingly, this ratio is far above the critical value at which an increase in fiber lengths still has a property-improving effect.

30 The mats are very flexible and bendable, have a width of up to 1 m and are available in weights per unit area of, for example, from 800 g/m² to 2000 g/m² rolled up into rolls. The mats can be cut with shears.

- 35 For the purposes of the invention, preference is given to using stainless steel wool having

a weight per unit area of from 900 to 1000 g/m² and a mean fiber diameter of from 0.08 to 0.12 mm.

In combination with the selected and compressed steel wool mat product in the form of steel wool fibers, in particular stainless steel wool, use is made of a suspension based on superfine cement.

Superfine cements are very fine hydraulic binders which are characterized by their chemomineralogical composition and a continuous and gradated particle size distribution. They generally comprise the customary cement raw materials such as milled portland cement clinker and/or milled slag sand and setting regulators; they are produced in separate production plants in cement works. The individual milling of the mineral starting materials, separation of their very fine constituents and their targeted composition in respect of, inter alia, particle sizes and particle size distribution are particularly advantageous.

The important feature of superfine cements which distinguishes them from conventional standard cements, e.g. in accordance with DIN 1164, is the comparatively great fineness of these binders together with the limitation of their largest particles, which is usually indicated by reporting of the particle diameter at 95% by mass of the mixture, namely d_{95} .

Preference is given to using superfine cements based on slag sand or portland cement having a continuous and gradated particle size distribution having a $d_{95} \leq 24 \mu\text{m}$, preferably $\leq 16 \mu\text{m}$, and a mean particle size d_{50} of $\leq 7 \mu\text{m}$, preferably $\leq 5 \mu\text{m}$. These are converted into suspensions by mixing them with water and with at least one superfluidizer (these are highly effective fluidizers or flow improvers) and also, in particular, with microsilica and/or pigments and/or inert mineral materials, e.g. ground limestone and/or quartz flour and/or fly ash, of the same or lower fineness as the superfine cement.

Microsilicas are products which are obtained in the processing of ferrosilicon. They are generally used in the form of aqueous dispersions as additives in high-performance concrete. This type of microsilica is known as "slurry". Essentially three independent effects can be distinguished in concrete with silicate additions:

- filler effect;
- pozzolanic reactions;
- improvement of the contact zone between aggregate and cement matrix.

Microsilicas have very small particle diameters. They are in the region of about $0.1\ \mu\text{m}$. Owing to this property, they are able to fill the interstices between the cement particles. As a result, the packing density in the cement matrix is significantly increased. Although the particle diameter of the cement used is in the order of $< 9.5\ \mu\text{m}$, the microsilica particles are much larger, thus resulting in the filler effect.

The pozzolanic properties of the microsilicas are mainly determined by two properties. Firstly, they have a certain proportion of reactive, amorphous siliceous constituents which react with the calcium hydroxide formed during the hydration of cement. Secondly, they have a large specific surface area on which these reactions can take place.

For the purposes of the present invention, the effect of the microsilica in improving the contact zone between aggregate and cement matrix is not brought to bear, because the suspensions used according to the invention contain no siliceous aggregate.

According to the invention, microsilica is added, for example, in amounts of from 10 to 15% by weight, based on the solids content, to the suspension in the form of a dispersion which consists essentially of 50% by weight

of microsilica and 50% by weight of water (slurry).

Superfine cements based on slag sand are particularly advantageous for the suspensions used according to the invention because the superfine cements, owing to their low reactivity, require lower water contents and lower contents of fluidizers and/or flow improvers to achieve low-viscosity properties compared to superfine cements based on portland cement.

- 10 Particularly suitable fluidizers or flow improvers are, for example, superfluidizers such as lignosulfonate, naphthalene-sulfonate, melaminesulfonate, polycarboxylate, which are known as highly effective dispersants for producing superfine cement suspensions.

To produce the suspensions used according to the invention, use is made, in particular, of the following mixtures:

Superfine cement:	from 30 to 100% by mass, in particular from 50 to 80, % by mass;
Fluidizer or flow improver (liquid):	from 0.1 to 5% by mass, in particular from 0.5 to 4.0, % by mass;
Fluidizer or flow improver (pulverulent):	from 0.1 to 2.5% by mass, in particular from 0.5 to 1.5, % by mass;
Microsilica (slurry):	from 0 to 30% by mass, in particular from 5 to 15, % by mass;
Pigments (pulverulent):	from 0 to 5% by mass, in particular from 1 to 3, % by mass;

Inert mineral materials: from 0 to 70% by mass, in particular from 10 to 30, % by mass;

Superfine fly ash: from 0 to 50% by mass, in particular from 10 to 30, % by mass;

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in each case based on the solids content of the suspension.

The low-viscosity suspensions advantageously have a water/solids ratio of from 0.4 to 0.6. Their consistency, measured as the Marsh outflow time, is from 35 to 75 seconds.

To produce a suspension, the required amount of water is, for example, placed in a mixing vessel. The mixer is then started up and fluidizers or flow improvers are added. The previously weighed out dry materials are subsequently added. The mixture is then mixed further and homogenized.

The components of the invention are, according to a particular embodiment of the invention, produced by means of shuttering. Here, the steel wool mats, which have a thickness of some millimeters, are placed between the shuttering, advantageously in a form compressed to a desired thickness, e.g. by means of the shuttering elements. Compression is possible owing to the wool-like structure and makes it possible to achieve a high steel wool content. A plurality of superposed mats make it possible to obtain reinforcement of any thickness, including, for example, crosswise reinforcement.

Since the mats are flexible and malleable, they can be matched to and pressed onto virtually any surface topographies. They can also be wound around components or patterns. The mats are laid into a mold with the fiber orientation corresponding to the expected direction of tension or, if appropriate, fixed at points on the component present and are compressed to the desired thickness by applying a shuttering element or the second half of the shuttering under an appropriate pressure. This procedure is shown in Fig. 1. The wool 1 is introduced into a first shuttering element 2 (process step a) and compressed by means of a second shuttering element 3 (arrow P, process step b).

The degree of reinforcement (proportion by volume of the steel wool fibers) is controlled by means of the compaction of the steel wool. Since steel wool fibers are also present on the surface of the component, stainless steel wool is used, particularly in cases in which the component is exposed to aggressive media. It is surprising that even steel wool mats compressed to from 10 to 20% of their delivered state can be completely and reliably filled with superfine binder suspensions. This is particularly astonishing because at fiber contents above about 6% by volume the mats have to be compacted so much that an apparently impenetrable felt is formed.

To achieve very complete and controlled filling of the hollow spaces between the shuttering elements, the shuttering is sealed at the edges and the suspension is introduced under pressure into the shuttering containing the compressed steel wool mat, with air outlet holes being provided so that the air displaced by the suspension in the shuttering can escape.

The principle of this process is shown by way of example in Fig. 2. Suspension 5 is injected from below in a direction opposite to that of gravity via an inlet 4 into the edge-sealed shuttering 2, 3 until the shuttering has been filled. The air can escape in an upward direction through the outlet 6. After curing of the suspension to form concrete, the shuttering is removed. The thin-walled component consists essentially of concrete and at least one compacted steel wool mat. It has unusually high strengths, plastic deformation, workability, energy absorption to fracture and elasticity, as a result of which such a thin component can be used as self-supporting building material. For example, it is possible to produce components less than 10 mm thick which have the following properties:

Thickness:	from 4 to 8 mm
Bending tensile strength:	up to 80 N/mm ²
Compressive strength:	up to 70 N/mm ²

Workability: very high
Impermeability, including
against water: very high

5 It is surprising that the process of the invention allows the
production of thin-walled components using suspensions which
normally do not result in high bending tensile strengths because
of the high water/cement ratio. It is surprising that the
process of the invention achieves the abovementioned properties
10 using suspensions which, owing to their comparatively high
water/cement ratio, would normally not lead one to expect such
high bending tensile strengths. In the case of SIMCON having a
steel fiber content of about 6% by volume and a very low
water/cement ratio of < 0.4 , only about half of the above
bending tensile strength is achieved. Owing to this surprisingly
high strength, it is possible to produce thin-walled self-
supporting components.

It is also surprising that, owing to the injection process, the
thin-walled components consist essentially of cement matrix on
their surface, while the steel wool fibers touch only a fraction
of the surface of the finished component despite the high
pressure applied by the shuttering.

25 The process of the invention allows the production of various
types of cement-bonded moldings which are very thin-walled and
highly reinforced and which can additionally be given virtually
any shape and, if desired, any surface structure. Examples of
applications are:

30 sheets;
shells;
pipes and
moldings having virtually any cross sections;

35 which can be used as roof and wall cladding or for sheathing or
cladding components to be protected or to be covered.

Such covering materials may be filled with mineral insulating materials (e.g. foamed concrete) and may serve as highly effective fire protection cladding. Such sheets, shells and moldings can, if necessary, be stiffened by appropriate shaping.

To achieve a high degree of prefabrication and a high degree of efficiency on the building site, half shells produced in the factory can be placed over the pipes or steel, wooden or plastic components to be clad in a manner similar to plastic cable ducts and subsequently joined together. The joints can be sealed using commercial materials and the hollow spaces can be filled with insulation material via filling ports.

Owing to the ability to achieve virtually any color, shape or surface structure and in particular owing to the high water impermeability and the excellent mechanical properties, the material of the invention can also be used as covering layer, e.g. for sandwich components. An example of such novel sandwich components are fire doors. For the same reasons, the novel structural material is also suitable as external skin for steel-reinforced concrete components, with this external skin being used as lost shuttering. Owing to the ability to manufacture the thin-walled fiber-reinforced material in a factory, a high degree of prefabrication can also be achieved, e.g. in the case of strut and beam shuttering, with spacers for the normal reinforcement being able to be integrated into it. A particular advantage is that such lost shuttering makes the after-treatment of the steel-reinforced concrete introduced unnecessary, increases the density, thereby reduces the carbonation rate and thus improves corrosion protection of the reinforcing steel. In the case of factory-made shuttering elements, the quality of the surface can be made far more uniform and controlled much better than in the case of concrete components produced on site. Coloring by means of expensive and complicated-to-use pigments is restricted to only the few millimeters of external skin. A good mechanical bond between external skin

and steel-reinforced concrete introduced could be achieved by means of knobs or suitable structuring on the inside.

5 The structural material of the invention is also suitable as repair material. Complete covering layers or localized patches can be applied to damaged steel-reinforced concrete surfaces. For this purpose, the faulty areas and hollows are stuffed with steel wool mats, shuttered, sealed and subsequently injected. Covering layers can also be applied by the lost shuttering method and can be backfilled by injection. Owing to the low viscosity of the suspension and the fineness of the binder and owing to the filling of the shuttering under pressure, complicated surface structures can also be molded. The invention can therefore also be utilized for producing reliefs and sculptures, 15 which is of particular advantage if the objects to be produced are subjected to particular mechanical stresses.

20 The process of the invention can be employed regardless of the orientation of the component; overhead applications, e.g. on undersides of components, are therefore also possible, in contrast to the SIMCON method.

25 The compression of the steel wool mats obviously produces a novel product which only in this way becomes usable for the purposes of the invention. In combination with the suspensions based on superfine cement, the compressed structure of the steel wool can interact with the cured suspension medium to produce a novel component having unexpected properties.

Claims

1. A thin-walled component comprising a superfine cement matrix and at least one compressed steel wool mat embedded in the superfine cement matrix.
2. A component as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the main surfaces of the component are virtually free of steel wool fibers.
3. A component as claimed in claim 1 and/or 2, characterized in that the main surfaces of the component are smooth and essentially superfine cement material is present on the surfaces.
4. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that a plurality of superposed, compacted steel wool mats are present therein.
5. A component as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that the steel wool mats are arranged so that the main directions of the steel wool fibers of the steel wool mats cross.
6. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 5, characterized by a content of steel wool mats of from 2 to 10% by volume, in particular from 4 to 8% by volume.
7. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 6, characterized by a thickness of from 3 to 10 mm, in particular from 4 to 8 mm.

8. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 7, characterized by a bending tensile strength of from 25 to 80 N/mm², in particular from 50 to 75 N/mm².

9. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 8, characterized by a compressive strength of from 30 to 75 N/mm², in particular from 45 to 60 N/mm².

10. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the component is colored by means of pigments.

11. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 10, characterized in that the component has a curved shape.

12. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 11, characterized in that the component has a shuttering structure on its main surfaces.

13. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 12, characterized in that the steel wool fibers of the steel wool mats have a mean fiber diameter of from 0.05 to 0.20 mm, in particular from 0.08 to 0.12 mm.

14. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 13, characterized in that the steel wool mats have a weight per unit area of from 600 to 2000 g/m², in particular from 700 to 1100 g/m².

15. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 14, characterized in that the steel wool fibers have a length/diameter ratio of over 1000.

16. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 15, characterized in that the

superfine cement matrix comprises microsilica in amounts of from 0 to 30% by mass, in particular from 5 to 15% by mass.

17. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 16,
5 characterized in that the superfine cement matrix comprises pigments in amounts of from 0 to 5% by mass, in particular from 1 to 3% by mass.

18. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 17,
10 characterized in that the superfine cement matrix comprises inert mineral materials in amounts of from 0 to 70% by mass, in particular from 10 to 30% by mass.

19. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 18,
15 characterized in that the superfine cement matrix comprises quartz flour in amounts of from 0 to 70% by mass, in particular from 10 to 30% by mass.

20. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 19,
20 characterized in that the superfine cement matrix comprises superfine fly ash in amounts of from 0 to 50, in particular from 0 to 30.

21. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 20,
25 characterized in that the superfine cement matrix is a portland cement matrix.

22. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 21,
30 characterized in that the superfine cement matrix is a slag cement matrix.

23. A component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 22,
characterized in that the compressed steel wool mats are from 3 to 10 mm thick, in particular from 4 to 8 mm thick.

35 24. A process for producing a thin-walled component, in

particular a component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 23, characterized in that at least one steel wool mat is compressed perpendicular to its main elongation and is injected with and surrounded by a suspension based on superfine cement and in that the suspension is cured.

25. The process as claimed in claim 24, characterized in that a stainless steel wool mat is used.

26. The process as claimed in claim 24 or 25, characterized in that a steel wool mat in which the steel wool fibers have mean fiber diameters of from 0.05 to 0.20 mm, in particular from 0.08 to 0.12 mm, is used.

27. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 26, characterized in that a steel wool mat in which the fiber lengths are from 20 mm to a plurality of meters, on average a plurality of decimeters, is used.

28. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 27, characterized in that a steel wool mat whose fibers have a length/diameter ratio of over 1000 is used.

29. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 28, characterized in that steel wool mats having a weight per unit area of from 600 to 2000 g/m², in particular from 700 to 1100 g/m², are used.

30. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 29, characterized in that the steel wool mat or mats is/are compressed by from 10 to 20% of its/their thickness.

31. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 30,

characterized in that at least two steel wool mats are used and the main direction of the fibers of one steel wool mat is at an angle to the main direction of the fibers of the other steel wool mat.

5

32. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 31, characterized in that a superfine cement suspension based on slag sand + activators is used.

10

33. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 32, characterized in that a suspension based on superfine cement on the basis of portland cement is used.

5

34. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 33, characterized in that a superfine cement having a gradated particle size distribution and a d_{95} of $\leq 24 \mu\text{m}$, preferably $\leq 16 \mu\text{m}$, is used for producing the superfine cement suspension.

20

35. The process as claimed in claim 34, characterized in that a superfine cement having a mean particle size d_{50} of $\leq 7 \mu\text{m}$, in particular $\leq 5 \mu\text{m}$, is used.

25

36. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 35, characterized in that superfine cement is mixed with water and a highly effective fluidizer or flow improver.

30

37. The process as claimed in claim 36, characterized in that microsilica, particularly in the form of a dispersion, is mixed in.

38. The process as claimed in claim 36 or 37, characterized in that a pigment is mixed in.

39. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 36 to 38, characterized in that a mineral material having the same fineness as or a greater fineness than the superfine cements is mixed in.

40. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 36 to 39, characterized in that naphthalenesulfonate is used as highly effective fluidizer.

41. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 36 to 40, characterized in that a polycarboxylate is used as super-fluidizer.

42. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 41, characterized in that the following compositions are used for producing the suspension based on superfine cement:

Superfine cement:	from 30 to 100% by mass, in particular from 50 to 80% by mass;
Fluidizer or flow improver (liquid):	from 0.1 to 5% by mass, in particular from 0.5 to 4.0% by mass;
Fluidizer or flow improver (pulverulent):	from 0.1 to 2.5% by mass, in particular from 0.5 to 1.5% by mass;
Microsilica (slurry):	from 0 to 30% by mass, in particular from 5 to 15% by mass;
Pigments (pulverulent):	from 0 to 5% by mass, in particular from 1 to 3% by mass;
Inert mineral materials:	from 0 to 70% by mass, in particular from 10 to 30% by mass;
Superfine fly ash:	from 0 to 50% by mass, in particular from 10 to 30% by mass;

based on the solids content of the suspension.

43. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 42, characterized in that suspensions having a water/solids ratio of from 0.4 to 0.6 are used.

44. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 43, characterized in that suspensions having a consistency, measured as the Marsh outflow time, of from 35 to 75 seconds are used.

45. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 44, characterized in that the suspensions are produced by placing the amount of water required in a mixing vessel and adding the fluidizer or flow improver while mixing, then adding the previously weighed out dry materials and continuing to mix and thus homogenize the mixture.

46. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 45, characterized in that the steel wool mats are compressed between sealed shuttering and the superfine cement suspension is injected under pressure into the shuttering, with an air outlet being provided so that the air can escape from the space within the shuttering during injection.

47. The process as claimed in claim 46, characterized in that injection is carried out in a direction opposite to that of gravity.

48. The process as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 47, in particular as claimed in claim 44 or 45, characterized in that components having a thickness of ≤ 10 mm are produced.

49. The use of a component as claimed in one or more of

claims 1 to 23 and produced as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 46 as roof and/or exterior wall and/or wall cladding.

50. The use of a component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 23 and produced as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 46 as sheathing or cladding for components to be protected or to be covered.

51. The use of a component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 23 and produced as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 46 in the form of half shells for producing and sheathing channels, pipes or the like.

52. The use of a component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 23 and produced as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 46 as a sandwich element for producing fire doors.

53. The use of a component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 23 and produced as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 46 as external skin for steel-reinforced concrete components.

54. The use as claimed in claim 53, characterized in that the external skin is lost shuttering.

55. The use of a component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 23 and produced as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 46 as lost shuttering.

56. The use of a component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 23 and produced as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 46 as repair material, wherein faulty areas and/or hollows in damaged concrete surfaces are stuffed with at least one steel wool mat, the mat is compressed and subsequently shuttered, sealed and the suspension is injected.

57. The use of a component as claimed in one or more of claims 1 to 23 and produced as claimed in one or more of claims 24 to 46 for molding complicated surface structures.

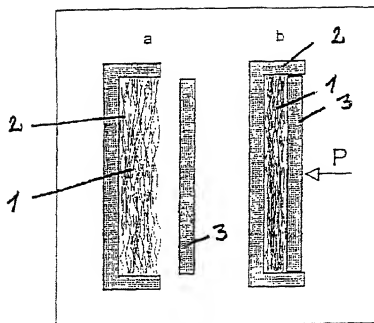


Fig. 1

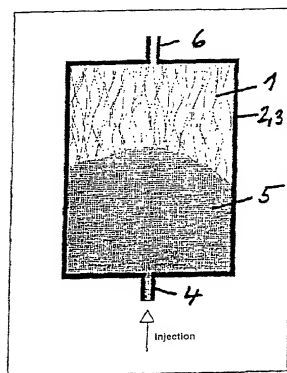


Fig. 2

Attorney Docket Number: 000020.00017

DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, mailing address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

Thin-Walled Component Made From Hydraulically Hardened Cement Paste Material and Method for the Production Thereof

the specification of which

☒ is attached hereto

C was filed on _____ as United States Application Number or PCT International Application Number _____ and (if applicable) was amended on _____

I hereby authorize our attorneys to insert the serial number assigned to this application.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR § 1.56

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or § 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or § 365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate, or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

PRIOR FOREIGN/PCT APPLICATION(S) AND ANY PRIORITY CLAIMS UNDER 35 USC § 119

APPLICATION NO.	COUNTRY	DAY/MONTH/YEAR FILED	PRIORITY CLAIMED
198 48 248,5	Germany	20 October 1998	X

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below.

PROVISIONAL APPLICATION(S) UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 119(e)

APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING DATE

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 120 of any United States application, or § 365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR § 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of this application.

PRIOR U.S./PCT INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION(S) DESIGNATED FOR BENEFIT UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 120

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	STATUS — PATENTED, PENDING, ABANDONED

I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith: Herbert Cohen, Reg. No. 25,109; Victor M. Wigman, Reg. No. 25,201; George C. Myers, Jr., Reg. No. 27,040; Donald R. Greene, Reg. No. 22,470; Michael C. Greenbaum, Reg. No. 28,419; Charles R. Wolfe, Jr., Reg. No. 28,680; Michael D. White, Reg. No. 32,795; Brian C. Jones, Reg. No. 37,857; David J. Edmondson, Reg. No. 35,126; Denise C. Lane, Reg. No. 42,780; Peter Weissman, Reg. No. 40,220; Nicholas Bromer, Reg. No. 33,478 and Rafael Perez, Reg. No. 46,041.

Customer No. 002775

Declaration for Patent Application (Continued)

Correspondence Address:
 BLANK ROME COMISKY & MCCAULEY, LLP
 The Farragut Building
 Suite 1000
 900 17th Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20006
 TEL (202) 530-7400
 FAX (202) 463-6915

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full Name of sole or first inventor (given name, family name)

CHRISTIAN BECHTOLDT

Signature <i>Ch. Bechtoldt</i>	Date 11.04.2001
Residence Rüdesheimer Strasse 40, D-65197 Wiesbaden, DEX	Citizenship German

Mailing Address Same as Residence Address

Full Name of additional joint inventor (given name, family name)

RÖLF-RAINER SCHULZ

Signature <i>R. Schulz</i>	Date 11.04.2001
Residence Brühlsstrasse 21, D-81267 Neu-Anspach, Germany, DEX	Citizenship German

Mailing Address Same as Residence Address

Full Name of additional joint inventor (given name, family name)

Signature	Date
Residence	Citizenship
Mailing Address	

Full Name of additional joint inventor (given name, family name)

Signature	Date
Residence	Citizenship
Mailing Address	

Full Name of additional joint inventor (given name, family name)

Signature	Date
Residence	Citizenship
Mailing Address	

□ Additional joint inventors are named on separately numbered sheets attached hereto